

The 1948 Act covered Family Pension, Provident Fund, Insurance, Payment of Bonus and was applicable to 948 units. On 31st March 1996 it covered 8.13 lakh coal mine workers. Now, the Provident Fund amount is proposed to be transferred to Pension Fund as per the decision of the P.F. Trustee Board. I would like to know whether various trade unions, whether it is BMS or other organisations, who understand workers problems better are represented in the Trustee Board or not? As the hon. Minister herself has said, the Bill is partial, twelve more items like family pension scheme, etc., are to be added. I do not know what all those twelve provisions are, but if they had been incorporated in this Bill, it would have become a comprehensive Bill.

Jena Sahib, we discussed the Advocates and Judges of the Supreme Court Bill for many hours, why should we be miser in discussing extensively the Bill concerning the welfare of more than 8 lakh coal mine workers?

It is the Government who is responsible for bringing this in comprehensive Bill. It should have brought a comprehensive Bill. We do not know how the pension scheme which we are appreciating, will be implemented. It would be better if an explanatory memorandum was added to the Bill.

I would like to mention one thing more. Accidents generally take place in coal mines. Last year, a serious accident took place in coal mines in Bihar when river water had entered the mines and hundreds of workers were buried under the debris. What provision has been made for those who are killed suddenly during such accidents? I suggest that a provision should be included in the bill to the effect that in case of death, irrespective of length of service rendered, it may be one year, ten years, fifteen years or thirty three years, the mine worker shall be entitled to pension and other benefits.

The Government is going to implement pension scheme for coal mine workers but I would like to point out that they are working in very difficult condition, there is no lighting arrangements inside the mine, no air conditioning, portable water is not available, safety measures are not upto the standard. Some new technology has been developed which prevents spread of poisonous gas and thus saves the life of the mine worker. I would like that these measures should be taken in these coal mines.

It has to be seen in what environment the families of these workers live in, whether there are arrangements for their schooling, for their medical treatment, Minimum civic amenities should be provided in the colonies these workers live in. All these things come under welfare measures. Government is introducing pension scheme which doesnot cost it anything because entire money will come from the provident fund of the workers. The

Government is transferring crores of rupees of workers Provident Fund to pension fund but what is its contribution to this fund? The Government must have some share in. Today, if a worker retires? ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat, kindly conclude.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : I want your protection for a minute.

Suppose a worker retires today and gets an amount of Rs. 2-4 lacs of his provident fund and keeps the same in fix deposit in the bank or invest it in Indira Vikas Patra or Kisan vikas patra, what amount of interest will he get? Will it be more than the pension amount he would get? This has also to be considered. However I welcome the provision made for widow pension and orphan pension.

I will also suggest that the coal mine worker who become entitled to retirement pension P.F. etc. should be given all the relevant documents on the day he retires as is done in case of retiring Government employees. With these words I conclude and thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

16.26 hrs.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Before hon. Member Shri Chitta Basu speaks, I will make an announcement. The Business Advisory Committee today has decided as follows :

"No Zero Hour from 25th of this month upto passing of Vote on Account;

No Lunch Hour on all the days upto passing of Vote on Account;

No Private Members' Business on Friday, the 26th July 1996, BAC will decide it on an alternate date separately;

Railway Budget debate will take place today and tomorrow;

Tonight and tomorrow night the House will sit late and complete the debate. The Railway Minister will reply on 26th at 12 noon. Dinner will be provided to the Members tonight and tomorrow night; and

Half-an-hour discussion and Calling Attention scheduled for this week stands deferred."